



# Parkhall Integrated College Drugs Policy

Agreed by Board of Governors: November 2024

To be reviewed: November 2026

## Rationale

Parkhall Integrated College is committed to promoting the health and well-being of all students. This Drugs Policy outlines our approach to drug education, prevention, and intervention, ensuring a safe and supportive environment for all members of our college community. The policy aims to provide clear guidelines regarding the use, possession, and distribution of drugs, including legal and illegal substances.

It is a statutory requirement for all schools in Northern Ireland to:

- have a drugs policy and publish details in relation to the policy in their prospectus (Education (School Information and Prospectuses) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003);
- deliver drugs education to include legal and illegal substances (The Education (Curriculum Minimum Content) Order (Northern Ireland) 2007); and
- inform the PSNI if they believe or suspect a student to be in possession of a controlled substance (Criminal Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1967)

## Definitions

For the purposes of this policy the terms **drug** and **substance** include any product that, when taken, has the effect of altering the way the body works or how a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks. (See Appendix 1 for a list of substances)

- **Controlled substances** are legally classified according to their benefit when used in medical treatment or harm if misused. The Misuse of Drugs Act sets out a range of substances that are controlled under the act. It is an offense to possess, possess with intent to supply, supply, or allow premises you occupy or manage to be used unlawfully for the purpose of producing or supplying controlled drugs. (See Appendix 2 for classification of drugs)
- **Drug use** refers to taking a drug; there is no value judgement, although all drug use has an element of risk.
- **Drug misuse** refers to legal, illegal or illicit drug taking or alcohol consumption, which leads a person to experience social, psychological, physical or legal problems related to intoxication or regular excessive consumption and/or dependence. Drug misuse is therefore taking drugs, including prescribed drugs and NPS, that cause harm to the individual, their significant others or the wider community.

## Purposes

This policy aims to:

- **Promote awareness:** To educate students about the risks and consequences of drug use, fostering informed decision-making.
- **Prevent drug misuse:** To implement strategies that prevent drug misuse and promote healthy lifestyles.
- **Provide support:** To offer support for students affected by drug-related issues, including those who may be experimenting with or misusing drugs.
- **Ensure safety:** To maintain a safe and drug-free environment within the college.

## Key Principles

Parkhall Integrated College is dedicated to fostering a safe and healthy environment for all students. This Drugs Policy reflects our commitment to drug education, prevention, and support for those affected by drug-related issues. By promoting awareness and providing clear guidelines, we aim to empower our students to make informed choices and lead healthy lives

- We will provide comprehensive drug education as part of the Learning for Life and Work curriculum, equipping students with knowledge and skills to make informed choices.
- We will create an environment where students feel safe to discuss drug-related issues and seek help without fear of stigma or punishment.

- We will engage with parents/guardians and external agencies to promote awareness and provide resources for drug education and prevention.
- We will establish clear procedures for dealing with drug-related incidents, ensuring consistency and fairness in our response.

### **Drug Education**

Drug education will be integrated into the Learning for Life and Work curriculum, covering topics such as the effects of drugs, peer pressure, and healthy lifestyle choices. As part of our preventative curriculum, we will organise workshops and invite guest speakers to provide additional insights and experiences related to drug use and prevention. Students will have access to information resources, including brochures, websites, and support services.

### **Guidelines**

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

##### **The Role of the Board of Governors**

School governors are responsible for their individual school. They should collaborate with appropriate staff, students and parents or carers to foster and support developing and reviewing its drugs policy. They should also:

- facilitate the consultative process where the school community can respond and contribute to the policy's effectiveness and quality, which the governors should examine and approve before implementing in the school;
- ensure details of the policy are published in the school prospectus and that these are reviewed at least annually and after a drug-related incident; and be fully aware of and adequately trained to deal with suspected drug-related incidents, including alcohol and tobacco, tobacco-related products, electronic cigarettes, and their appropriate disciplinary response.

As a matter of good practice, every Board of Governors should have a designated governor for drugs who has received specific training in drug-related issues.

##### **The Role of the principal**

It is the principal's responsibility to determine the circumstances of all incidents, but it is the responsibility of the PSNI to investigate any criminal or suspected criminal offence. In any suspected drug-related incident, the principal should contact the parents or carers of those students involved. The principal must ensure that in any incident involving a controlled substance there is close liaison with the PSNI. **Failure to inform the PSNI of a suspected incident involving controlled drugs is a criminal offence.**

After contacting the PSNI, principals should confine their responsibilities to:

- the welfare of the student(s) involved in the incident and the other students in the school;
- health and safety during the handling, storage and safe disposal of any drug or drug related paraphernalia, using protective gloves at all times;
- informing the Board of Governors;
- agreeing any appropriate pastoral or disciplinary response;
- reporting the incident to the Education Authority if appropriate, for example if an incident:
  - is serious enough to require PSNI involvement;
  - requires that a child protection procedure is invoked; or
  - leads to the suspension or exclusion of a student; and
- completing a written report and forwarding a copy to the Board of Governors and the designated officer in the Education Authority.

##### **The role of the designated teacher for drugs**

##### **Designated Teachers for Drug Related Incidents (DTDRI)**

Designated Teacher for Drug Related Incidents - Mrs Davidson Brown  
Deputy Designated Teacher for Drug Related Incidents – Mrs Lind McKibbin

Every member of the school's staff, both teaching and non-teaching, should be completely familiar with the college's procedures and know who to contact and what to do when a young person is suspected either of being in possession of drugs or being under the influence of drugs, including alcohol.

The designated teacher is responsible for:

- co-ordinating the school's procedures for handling suspected drug-related incidents and training and inducting new and existing staff in these procedures;
- ensuring that the school's disciplinary policy has an appropriate statement about any disciplinary response resulting from suspected drug-related incidents;
- ensuring that the school's pastoral care policy has an appropriate statement about any pastoral response resulting from suspected drug-related incidents;
- liaising with other staff responsible for pastoral care;
- being the contact point for outside agencies that may have to work with the school or with a student or students concerned;
- responding to advice from first aiders, in the event of an incident, and informing the principal, who should contact the student's parents or carers immediately;
- taking possession of any substance(s) and associated paraphernalia found in a suspected incident;
- student(s) involved in a suspected incident;
- completing a factual report using the schools Drug-Related Incident Form, which they forward to the principal; and
- reviewing and if required updating the policy at least annually and after a drug-related incident, where learning from the experience could improve practice.

The designated teachers are a member of the school's senior management

#### **The role of the individual staff member (teaching and non-teaching) including all ancillary staff**

All staff should be familiar with the content of the school's drug policy. They should also be fully aware of their responsibilities, should a suspected drug-related incident occur. It is not the staff's responsibility to determine the circumstances surrounding the incident, but they should:

- assess the situation and decide on the appropriate actions to take;
- notify the principal and the designated teacher for drugs at the earliest opportunity;
- deal with any emergency procedures to ensure the safety of students and staff, if necessary (see Appendix 5);
- forward any information, substance or paraphernalia received to the designated teacher for drugs, who will respond accordingly (see Appendix 3);
- use the school's Drugs Incident Report Form to complete a brief factual report on the suspected incident and forward this to the designated teacher for drugs (see Appendix 4);
- consider the needs and safety of a student when discharging him or her into the care of a parent or carer who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or another substance (staff, who are in loco parentis, should maintain a calm atmosphere when dealing with the parent and, if concerned, should discuss with the parent alternative arrangements for caring for the student); and
- invoke safeguarding procedures, if a parent or carer's behaviour may place a student at risk (see Appendix 3).

#### **Procedures for managing drug-related incidents.** (See appendix 4 for flow charts of scenarios)

##### *Response to Drug Incidents*

**Immediate Action:** If a student is found in possession of drugs or under the influence, staff will ensure the safety of the student and others, following emergency procedures if necessary.

**Investigation:** A thorough investigation will be conducted, involving appropriate staff members, and, if necessary, parents and external agencies.

**Disciplinary Measures:** Disciplinary measures will be applied in accordance with the college's behaviour policy, which may include suspension or expulsion for serious violations.

##### *Support for Affected Students*

**Counselling Services:** Access to counselling services will be provided for students affected by drug issues, offering a safe space to discuss their concerns.

Referral to External Agencies: Where appropriate, students may be referred to external support services for further assistance.

**Training and Development**

Staff will have opportunities for ongoing professional development to stay informed about current drug issues and best practises in drug education.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

This Drugs Policy will be reviewed to ensure its effectiveness and relevance to the needs of our college community.

We will establish feedback mechanisms to gather input from students, parents/guardians, and staff regarding the effectiveness of our drug education and prevention strategies.

These policy Guidelines are translated into action through other policies and procedures, for example:

- *Pastoral Care Policy*
- *Child Protection and Adult Policy*
- *First Aid Policy*
- *Addressing Bullying in Schools Policy*
- *Health and Safety Procedures*
- *Managing Critical Incidents Plan*
- *Counselling Policy*
- *Behaviour for Learning Policy*
- *CCEA Drugs Guidance for School (2015)*
- *Supporting Students with medical needs (DENI)*

***Appendix 1***

**Substances**

As well as everyday products such as tea and coffee, substances include:

- alcohol, tobacco and tobacco-related products, including nicotine replacement therapy(NRT), and electronic cigarettes;
- over-the-counter medicines such as paracetamol and cough medicine;
- prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics, painkillers, antidepressants, antipsychotics, inhalers and stimulants such as Ritalin;
- volatile substances such as correcting fluids or thinners, gas lighter fuel, aerosols, glues and petrol;
- controlled drugs such as cannabis, LSD, ecstasy, amphetamine sulphate (speed), magic mushrooms, heroin and cocaine;
- new psychoactive substances (NPS), formerly known as legal highs\*, which contain one or more chemical substances that produce similar effects to illegal drugs and are sold as incense, salts or plant food and marked 'not for human consumption' to avoid prosecution;
- other substances such as amyl or butyl nitrite (known as poppers) and unprocessed magic mushrooms.

Appendix 2

Main Types of Controlled Substances by Class

The Misuse of Drugs Act (1971)

Class	Drug	Possession	Supply and production
A	Crack cocaine, cocaine, ecstasy (MDMA), heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, methadone, methamphetamine (crystal meth)	Up to 7 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both	Up to life in prison, an unlimited fine or both
B	Amphetamines, barbiturates, cannabis, codeine, ketamine, methylphenidate (Ritalin), synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones (eg mephedrone, methoxetamine)	Up to 5 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both	Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both
C	Anabolic steroids, benzodiazepines (diazepam), gamma hydroxybutyrate (GHB), gamma-butyrolactone (GBL), piperazines (BZP)	Up to 2 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both (except anabolic steroids - it's not an offence to possess them for personal use)	Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both
Temporary class drugs*	NBOMe and Benzofuran compounds	None, but police can take away a suspected temporary class drug	Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both

[www.gov.uk/penalties-drug-possession-dealing](http://www.gov.uk/penalties-drug-possession-dealing)

Please note the above table refers to some commonly available drugs. It is not a complete list of controlled drugs.

Offences under the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971)

These include:

- possession – to knowingly be in possession of a relatively small quantity of a controlled substance for personal use; the police decide what constitutes a small quantity;
- possession with intent to supply another person a controlled substance – possessing a larger quantity of a substance or packaging it in a way that indicates it is going to be
- supplied to others;
- supplying another person with a controlled substance – giving or selling a substance to someone else, including friends;
- supplying or offering to supply substance paraphernalia – this includes equipment for
- smoking cannabis or crack cocaine, but needles and syringes are exempt.

Appendix 3

**Checklist of Roles and Responsibilities When Managing an Incident**

**Individual staff members should:**

- assess the situation and decide the action;
- make the situation safe for all pupils and other members of staff, secure first aid and send for additional staff support, if necessary;
- carefully gather up any drugs and/or associated paraphernalia or evidence and pass all information or evidence to the designated teacher for drugs; and
- write a brief factual report of the incident and forward it to the designated teacher for drugs.

**The designated teacher for drugs should:**

- respond to first aider's advice or recommendations;
- inform parents or carers immediately, in the case of an emergency;
- take possession of any substance(s) and associated paraphernalia found;
- inform the principal;
- take initial responsibility for pupil(s) involved in the suspected incident; and
- complete a Drugs Incident Report Form (see Appendix 5) and forward it to the principal.

**The principal should:**

- determine the circumstances surrounding the incident;
- ensure that the following people are informed:
  - parents or carers;
  - designated officer in the local PSNI area;
  - Board of Governors; and
  - designated officer in Education Authority.
- consult and agree pastoral and disciplinary responses, including counselling services or support;
- forward a copy of the Incident Report Form to the chairperson of the Board of Governors and the designated officer in the Education Authority, if appropriate; and
- review procedures and amend, if necessary.

Appendix 4

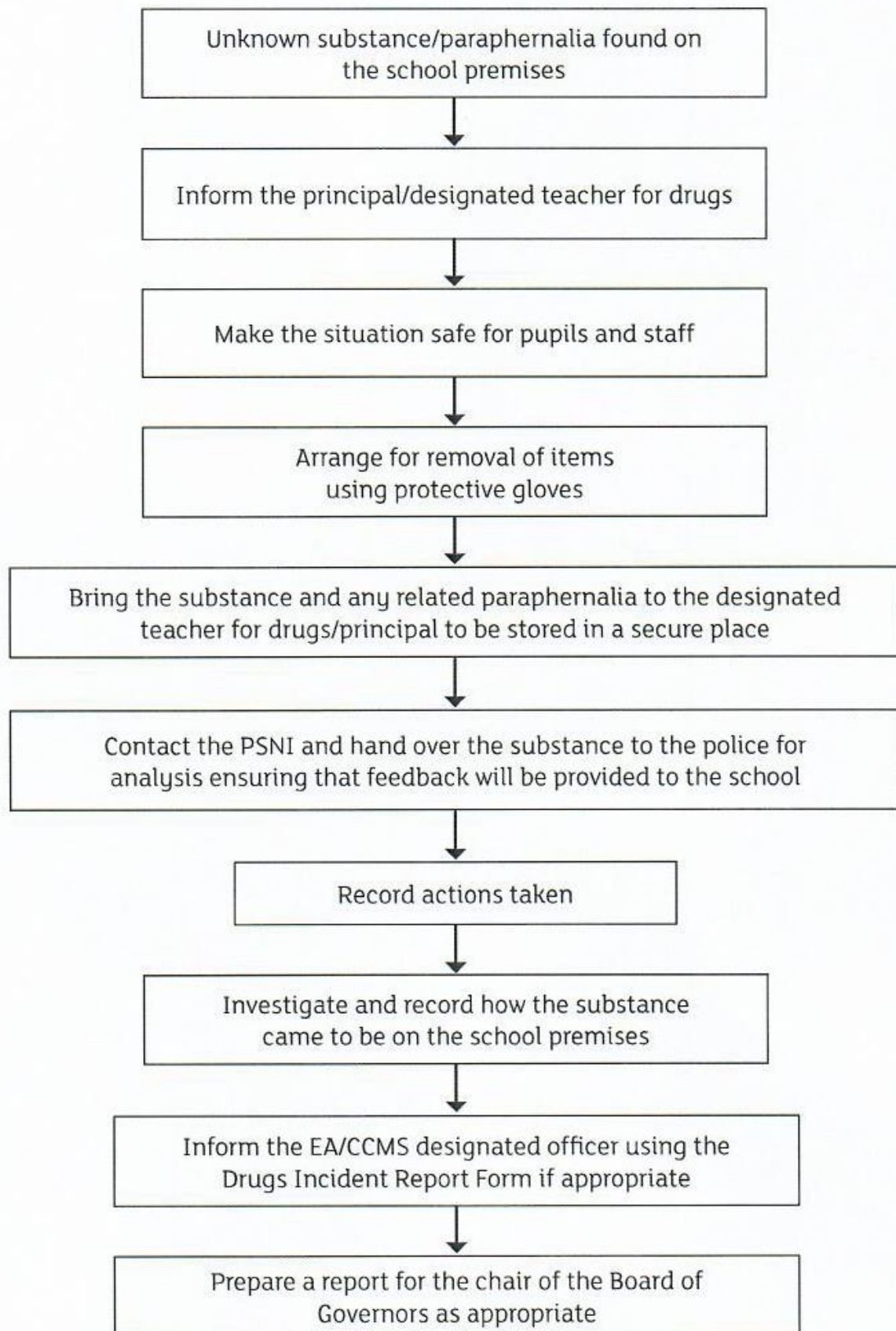
**Handling Drugs Related Incidents**

The flowcharts on the following pages outline the procedures to these situations:

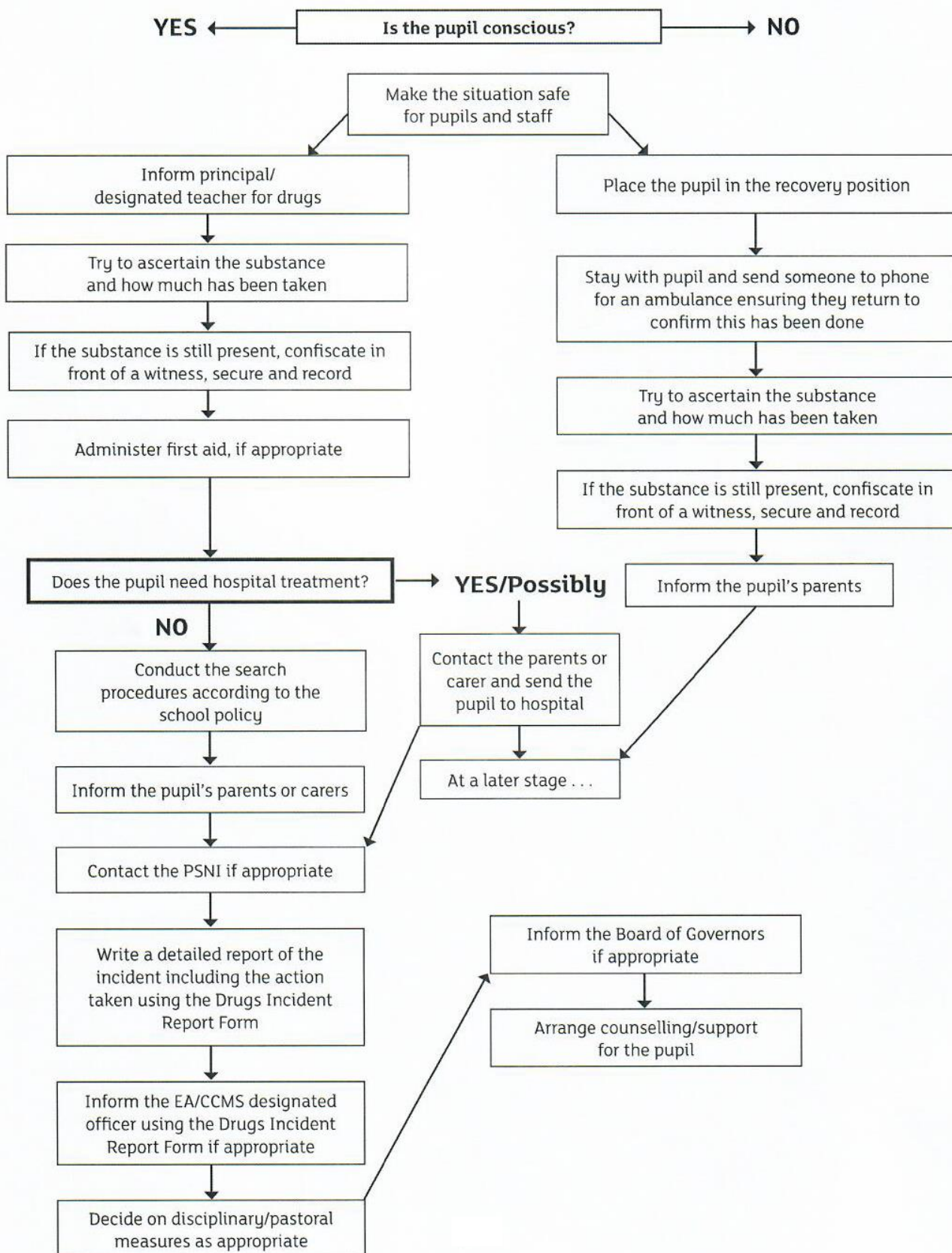
- Finding a suspected substances or drug related paraphernalia on or close to the school premises
- Student suspected of having drugs/alcohol on college premises.
- Student in possession of alcohol or unauthorised prescribed medication on the school premises
- A parent or carer arrives at school to collect a child and appears to be under the influence of alcohol or another substance.



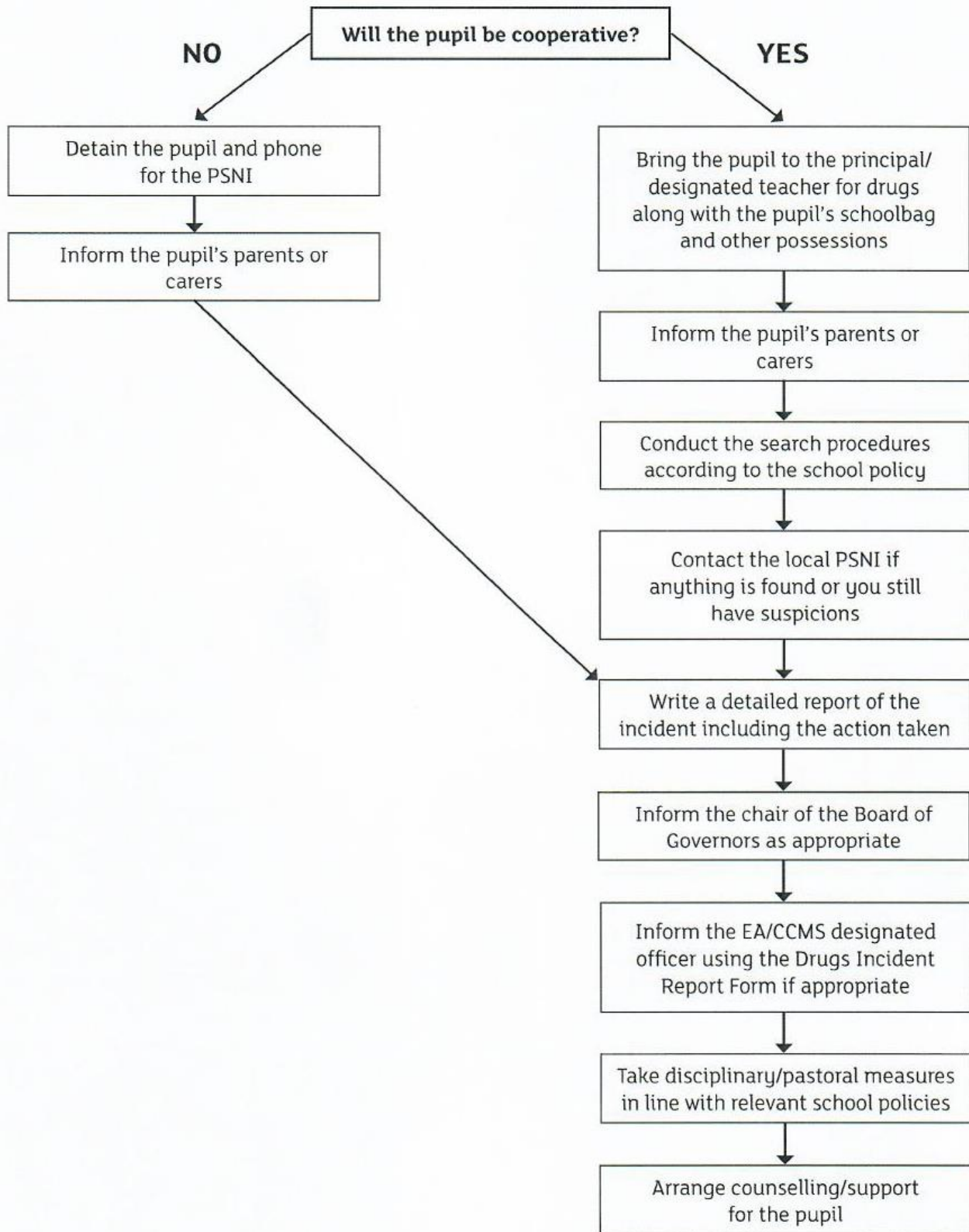
## Finding a suspected substances or drug related paraphernalia on or close to the school premises



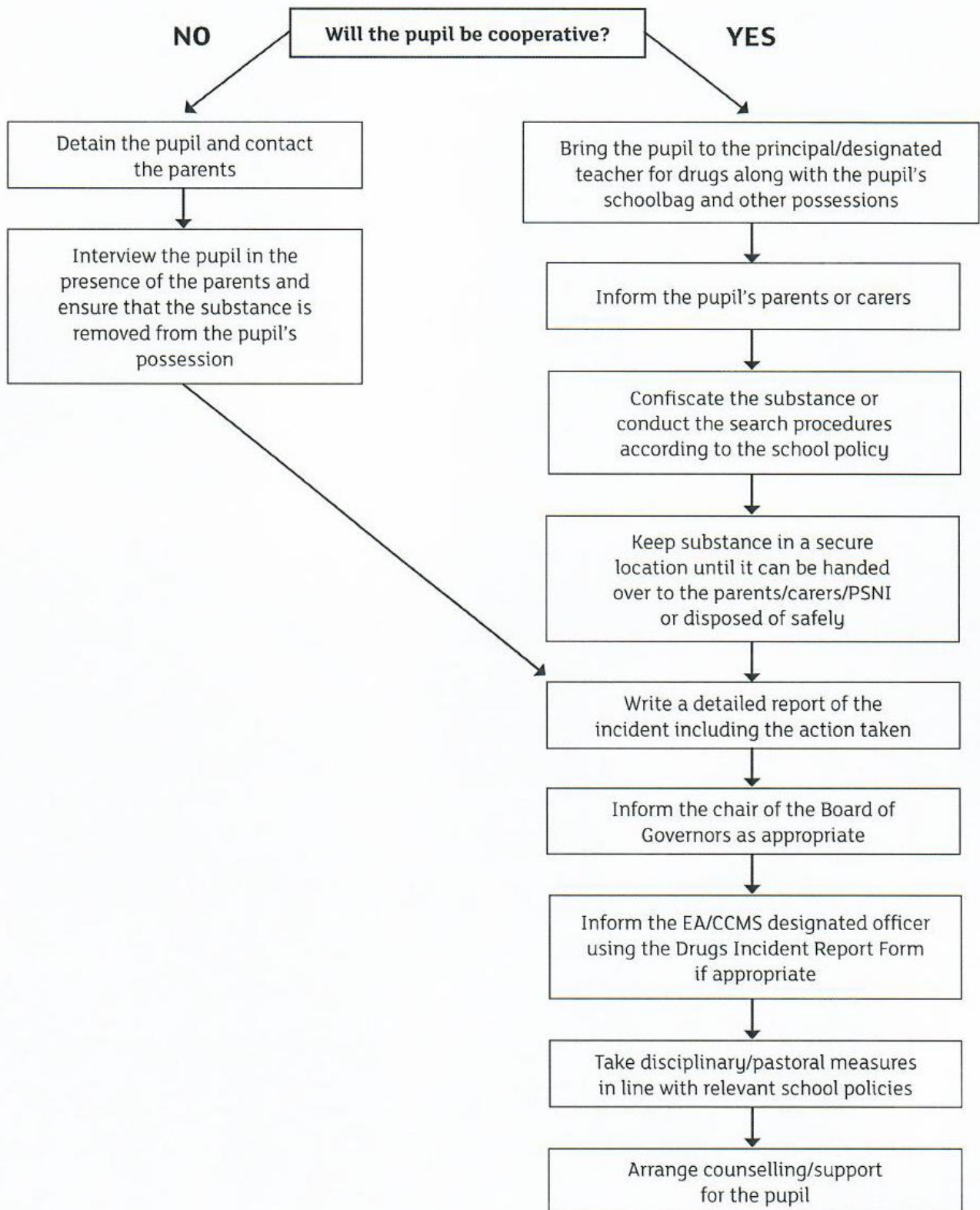
Student suspected of having drugs/alcohol on college premises



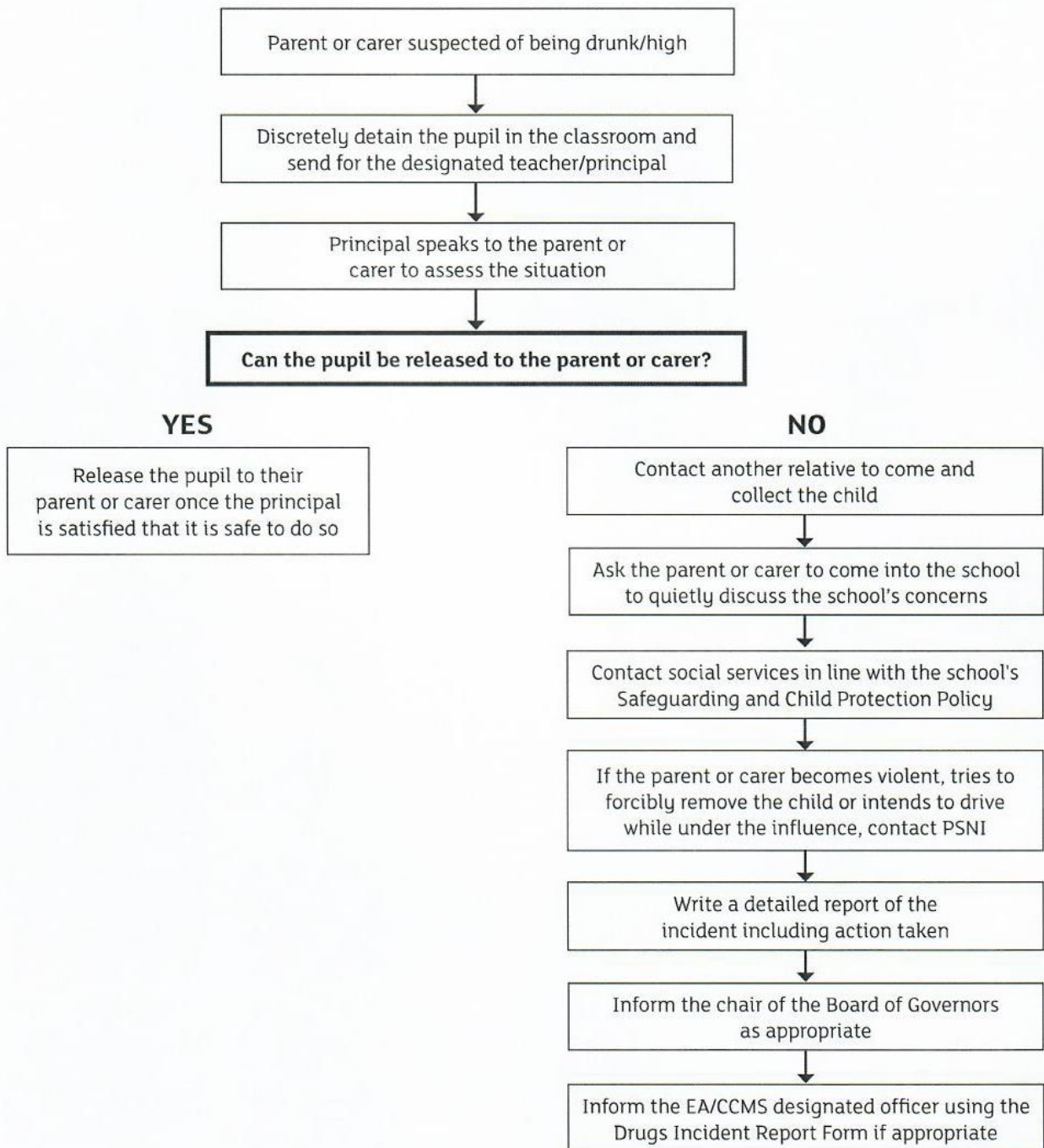
Student suspected of possessing/distributing an illegal substance



Student in possession of alcohol or unauthorised prescribed medication on the school premises



A parent or carer arrives at school to collect a child and appears to be under the influence of alcohol or another substance



Appendix 5



Parkhall Integrated College

Drugs Incident Report Form

1.	Name of Pupil _____ DOB _____ Address _____ _____
2.	Date of Incident _____ Reported by _____ Time of Incident _____ Location of Incident _____ _____
3.	First Aid given YES/NO Administered by _____ Ambulance/Doctor Called YES/NO Time of Call _____
4.	Parent or carer informed YES/NO Date _____ Time _____
5.	Where substance is retained _____ or Date substance destroyed or passed to PSNI _____ Time _____
6.	PSNI informed YES/NO Date _____ Time _____
7.	Education Authority or CCMS Designated Officer informed, as appropriate YES/NO Date _____ Time _____
8.	Form completed by _____ Date _____ Position _____

Description of the Incident

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Actions taken

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Incident form completed by

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Date

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**Appendix 6**

**Recognising Signs of Substance Use**

**What to look out for**

If someone is having a bad time on drugs, they may be:

- anxious;
- tense;
- panicky;
- overheated and dehydrated;
- drowsy; or
- having difficulty with breathing.

**What to do**

The first things you should do are:

- stay calm;
- calm them and be reassuring, don't scare them or chase after them;
- try to find out what they've taken; and
- stay with them.

**If they are anxious, tense or panicky, you should:**

- sit them in a quiet and calm room;
- keep them away from crowds, bright lights and loud noises;
- tell them to take slow deep breaths; and
- stay with them.

**If they are really drowsy, you should:**

- sit them in a quiet place and keep them awake;
- if they become unconscious or don't respond, call an ambulance immediately and place them in the recovery position;
- don't scare them, shout at them or shock them;
- don't give them coffee to wake them up; and
- don't put them in a cold shower to 'wake them up'.

**If they are unconscious or having difficulty breathing, you should:**

- immediately phone for an ambulance;
- place them into the recovery position;
- stay with them until the ambulance arrives; and
- if you know what drug they've taken, tell the ambulance crew; this can help make sure that they get the right treatment straight away.



## Appendix 7

**Voluntary Organisations**

A confidential support and counselling service is offered to young drug users and their families by the following organisations, which also provide advice, information and/or prevention programmes for schools:

Family Works Counselling	Tel: 02891821721
Contact Youth, Belfast ( <a href="http://www.contactyouth.org">www.contactyouth.org</a> )	Tel: 028 90 457848
Lifeline (24 Hour Counselling)	Tel: 0808 808 8000
Dunlewey Substance Advice Centre (Counselling support and mentoring for 17 year olds and under)	Tel; 028 25652105
Alcoholics Anonymous ( <a href="http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk">www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk</a> )	Tel: 028 90 434848
Help to stop smoking	<a href="http://www.want2stop.info">www.want2stop.info</a>
Smokers helpline	Tel: 0800 858585
National Drugs Helpline	Tel: 0800 776600
START 360	Tel: 028 90435810
The Hope Centre (Family Support)	Tel: 028 25632726
Youth Justice Area office 7 Springwell Street Ballymena BT43 6AT Assistant Director: Grainne Keane Email <a href="mailto:info@yjani.gov.uk">info@yjani.gov.uk</a>	Tel: 028 2566 2222